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Art + Science = Eye-Opening Experience

03.14.2008 | Students, Fine Arts, Science

University of Dayton student Leah Makley has found that the sciences don't always follow rigid formulas and the arts aren't always creative.

Makley made her discovery in Art + Science, a UD one-semester mini-course in which students used scientific imagery as a basis for making art. They worked in ceramic and printmaking studios and biology, photography and the University of Dayton Research Institute's Nanoscale Engineering Science and Technology (NEST) labs.

"The sciences are creative disciplines, and the arts can be very process-driven and methodical," Makley said. "This course offered experiences in areas where art and science overlap and let us spend time working in studios and labs that we generally wouldn't be able to use."

Students who met with Scott Streiker, a UD associate research electron microscopist in UD's NEST lab took pictures of seeds, moths and beetles under a high-resolution scanning electron microscope.

"A lot of art students had never been in a university science lab and the engineering students had never been in an art studio," Streiker said. "It was neat to see them do things that were out of the box for them."

The students are displaying their work now through April 4 in ArtStreet Studio D Gallery. Gallery hours are 8 a.m. to midnight weekdays and noon to midnight Saturday and Sunday. ArtStreet is in the 300 block of Kiefaber Street.

"My experience definitely increased my awareness of the connections between the two disciplines," Makley added. "I think the experience is valuable for anyone who is trying to bridge the gap. But, I also think it would interest students in either of the two disciplines with little exposure to the other."

Art + Science was designed to help art, science and other students use campus resources outside their disciplines to develop new skills. Course developers wanted to inspire fresh perspectives on problem solving for students and faculty.

ArtStreet and a grant from the UD Office of the Provost's Enhancing Student Culture for Academic Engagement and Excellence fund supported the course.

ArtStreet at 937-229-5101.